[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare.

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers.

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers.

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on the ground to make a bed. There may also be a wooden stool, given by or stolen from the villagers, or a rough chair made from stout saplings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires to preserve meat for barter.

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UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers (Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many archers now make mortars for themselves. There may also be wooden plates of village origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays. All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also come from the villagers, and, like the cooking utensils, these foreign importations are said to have become indispensable to the archers.

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412
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[439]

412
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[439]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, some unhafted, always worn in the belt by women and used for preparing food and for sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in both gathering activities and in cooking. Other items that might be found in or around an Efe archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell (Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and sometimes used in the search for honey, an ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children, and a few personal possessions such as hunting charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the archers for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn tucked between the legs. The upper part of the body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Basketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur bands which may also be worn on the arm. Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded bark. Both men and women may wear, around the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers

[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]

[P.175-A]

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P
412
222
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FIG. 13. Adze, Bira villagers, rehafted by Mbuti archers, Central Ituri. A villager utensil, useful but not indispensable to the Mbuti, for the extraction of honey from hives in tree boles.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.175-D]

BP 412.

FIG. 14. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Ax blade. A common gift made by villagers to Mbuti, nominally under their control, on the occasion of an Mbuti marriage. b. Ax, used by Mbuti mainly for the cutting of light saplings with which they make their house frames; Bira hafting.

BP [illegible]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 would hasten the hour of birth. Pregnancy is
843 recognized by the cessation of the menses and the discoloration of the breasts. During pregnancy a woman is subject to various alimentary taboos, but otherwise lives her full, ordinary life, including the carrying of heavy loads of wood, carrying all household goods when moving camp, going in search of food, and other specific activities of women.

844 Customs attending childbirth vary from region to region, but Schebesta concludes that, although archers have no effective method of dealing with complications, the women normally give birth easily and without any particu-
[184] lar preparation. Although this account does not specifically relate to the Efe archers, Schebesta (1948, 402) writes that, from his observations throughout the forest, certain generalizations
844 are possible. Women alone are admitted to
412 assist in the childbirth. The father cuts the umbilical cord with an arrowpoint, or, among some bands, with a sharp piece of bamboo. Before metal blades were available, Schebesta (1948, 404) says that there is evidence that bamboo knives or sharp leaves were used.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies
Mbuti
Bira FO11

188 (A)

• 412
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FIG. 15. Miscellaneous items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Comb. b-c. Notched flutes. These luxuries are not an essential part of hunting life but seem to be gradually becoming more common.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

412
284
824

FIG. 18. Broom, *edia*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such brooms are made daily by net hunters. The area in front of each hut is swept with leafy branches bound loosely together in this manner.

[512]
[356]
[P. 194-D]

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.)

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him.

FURNITURE

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf.

UTENSILS

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

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415

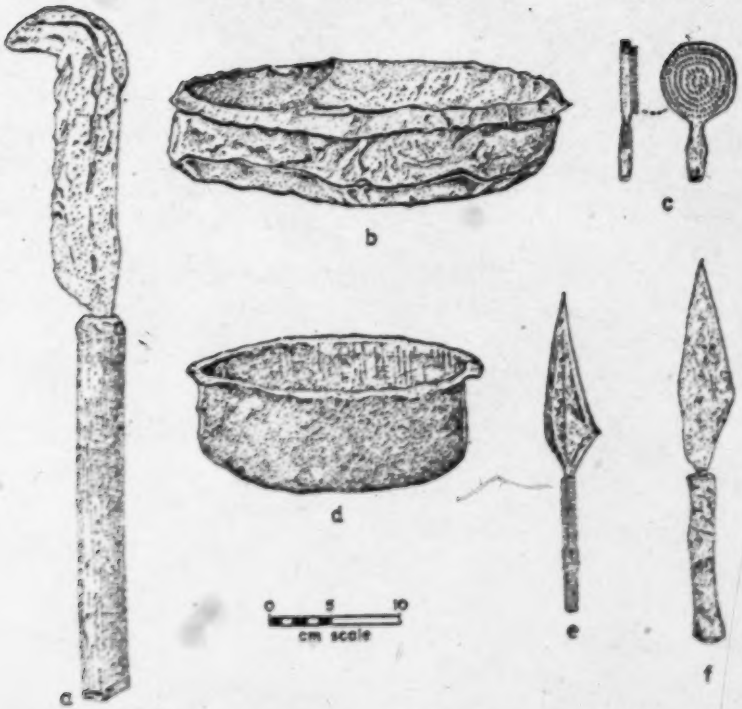

FIG. 21. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Machete, used for cutting large saplings such as those required for village houses. b. Cooking vessel (trade), needed for the cooking of village foods, such as rice, requiring boiling. c. Comb. Another villager use of metal that finds favor among the Mbuti. d. Cooking vessel. e. Knife. f. Knife, used mainly, and widely, by Mbuti women for food preparation and for the preparation of roofing leaves. These are the common household utensils of metal that might be found in any net-hunting camp.

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[777]
[439]

[P.196-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy himself, and certainly the arrow shafts are Pygmy-made. Open-mesh baskets (Fig. 41) are made by the women, who also obtain close-mesh baskets (Fig. 42) from the villagers.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

Clothing of the net hunters is also similar to that described by Schebesta, but with less ornamentation of fur and skin and less use of charms and amulets. Putnam denies the use of skins for clothing among the Pygmies he knows. Anne Putnam ranks the manufacture of barkcloth as the major industry in a net-hunting camp, occupying even more time than the making and repair of nets. Putnam once said that the Pygmies did not make nets, but obtained them from the villagers; later, he changed his opinion.[1] A net is never made complete, but in the course of repair pieces are added or removed to start a new net.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

new net. About 12 different kinds of bark can be used for the making of barkcloth, differing not only in color but also in texture. The ivory bark beaters are always hafted (Fig. 22), unlike those of the archers; the beating ends may have one of three forms of grooving (Fig. 23), the dia-

FIG. 22. Bark beater, *kolea*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. While wooden beaters are sometimes used, more frequently the ends of small elephant tusks are hafted and used to make barkcloth.

[1] In fact, net making is a major and constant activity calling for cooperation between men and women.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-C]

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412.
[284]

FIG. 23. Types of grooving found on ivory bark-beater heads, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

mond grooving being the commonest. There are only about two bark beaters to a camp.

There are two main ways of preparing the cloth. Strips of the bark of *Ficus* are peeled off the trunk between two horizontal and one vertical slit. Before the beating, the outer bark is scraped off, then the inner bark is softened either by being soaked in water from half an hour to 12 hours, according to the type of bark, or by being heated and smoked over a fire.

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[824]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

or by being heated and smoked over a fire. The resultant barkcloth may be worn in its natural color, dyed red or blue, or be painted with simple designs (Figs. 25–27), The dyeing and painting are done by women, using a special mud for an over-all blue dye, the juice of a citrous fruit for blue line designs, and *nkula* (elsewhere *ngula*) bark, scraped with another piece of bark (Fig. 24), with water added while scraping, for

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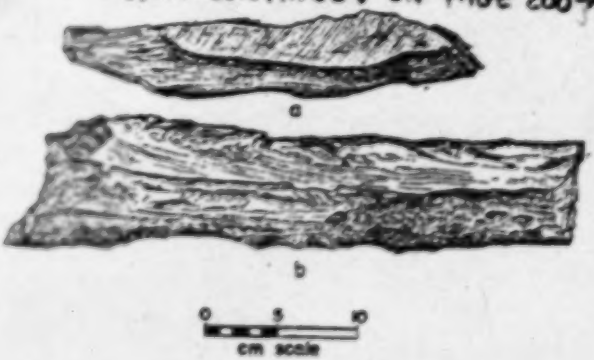
386
531

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 200-A]



[412]

FIG. 24. Block and scraper of wood, *nkula* (also *ngula*), net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri; used with water for the extraction of the red dye most commonly employed in the decoration of barkcloth.

[P.197-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.215]

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[411]

[534]

[412]

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[411]

[285]

[411]

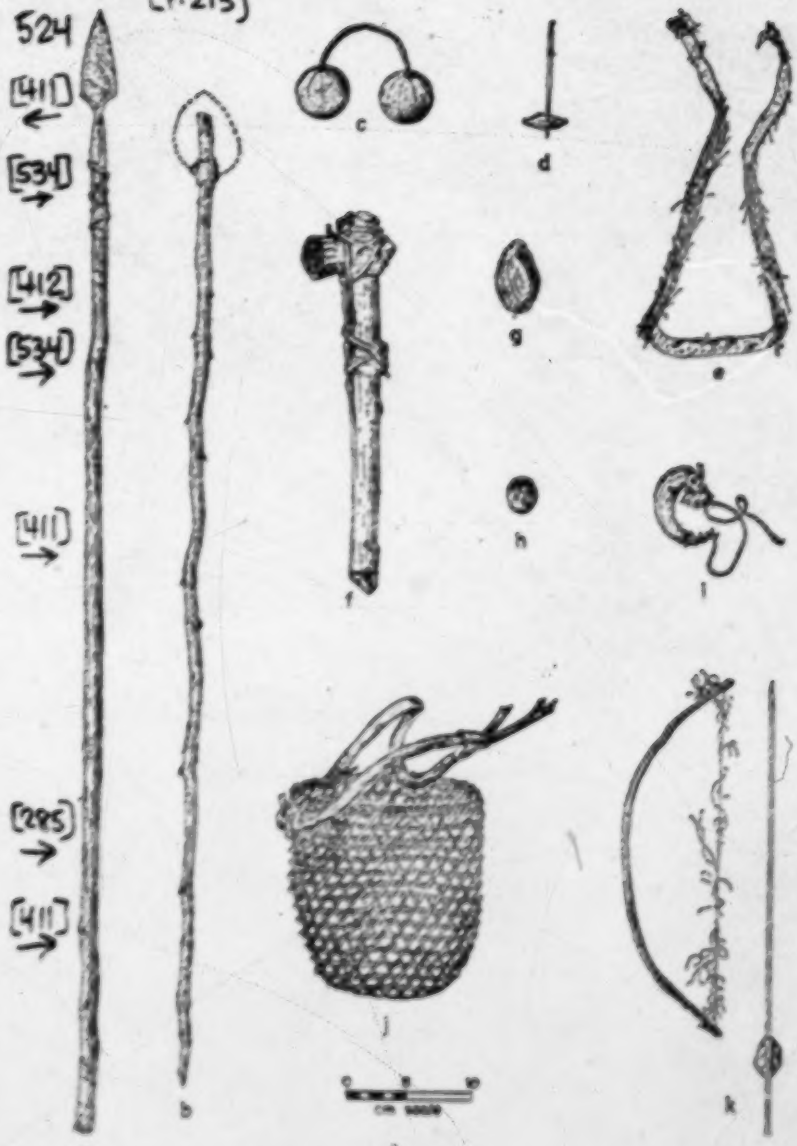

FIG. 45. Toys, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Spear, *ekunga*. b. Fire spear, *irmahamaloki*. c. Castanets, *kolokkenje*. d. Top, *tokiya*. e. Baby sling, *koka*. f. Bark beater, *kalea*. g-h. Seed whistles, *pio'a*. i. Wrist protector, *ezuka*. j. Basket, *ea*. k. Bow, *mangu*, and arrow, *apa*.

PLATE 31 1/4

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, STRIPPING,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

516
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883
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Barkcloth manufacture is predominantly the work of youths or young hunters. The first step, after the strip of bark is cut from a vine, is the stripping of the outer bark. Here a youth uses his leg as a platform for support and works with a village-made machete. In the absence of a metal blade, it is said by the Mbuti that they use slivers of bamboo or sharp stones as knives.

1/1./Plate 31 appears on page 295--Analyst/

[P.294]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
287
412
883
516
177

/Plate 31/

[P 296] /Caption appears on p. 294/

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 32

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
197 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with ther fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.
531
386 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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412
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/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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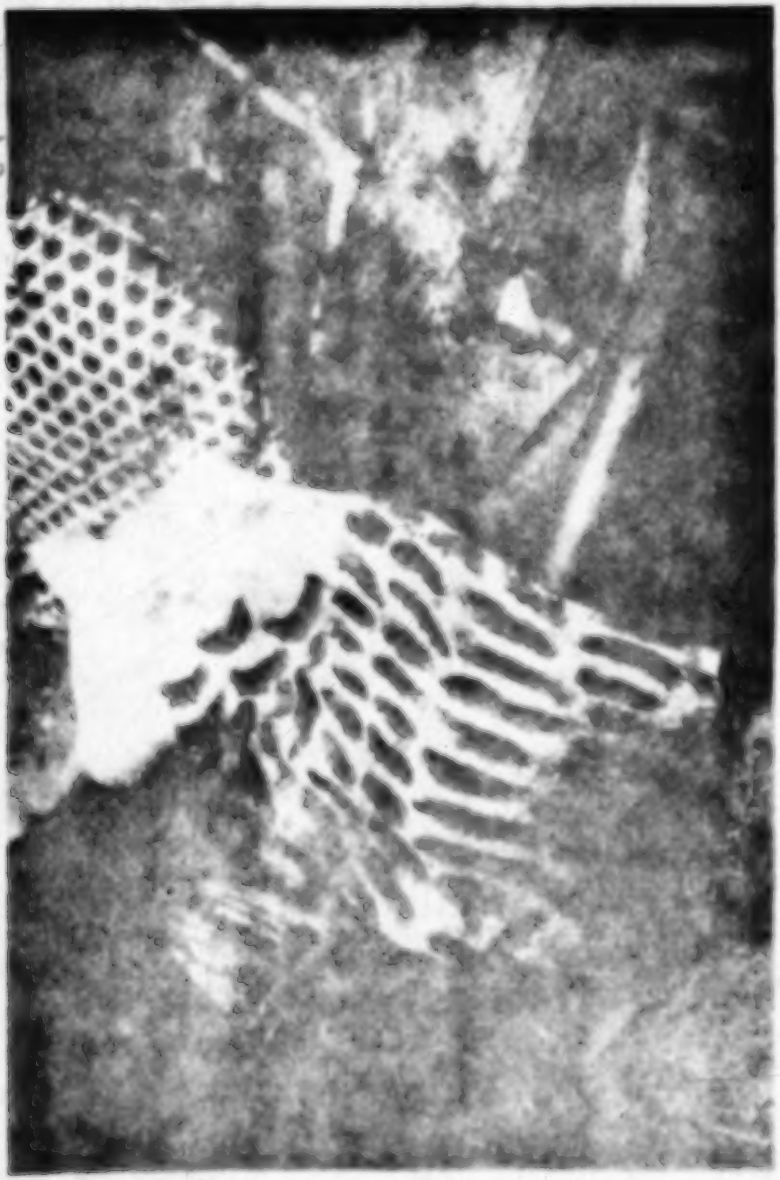

/Plate 32-B/

/Caption appears on p. 296/

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 36 1/A

COLLECTING HONEY, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

222 462 412 a. Honey is generally found high in the treetops in the fork of a limb or in a bole. More rarely, it is found in the main trunk a few feet above the ground. Only when the hive is in a fallen trunk on the ground itself do women collect honey; at other times it is exclusively the work of men and youths. An ax or adze is used to enlarge the opening, the bees are then smoked out, and the honey is withdrawn by hand.

327 262 252 [251] b. As with the rest of Mbuti food economy, honey is eaten as gathered, never stored. Comb sections are eaten raw; the liquid is usually warmed over a fire and drunk. If the honey contains too much dirt, it is wrapped in leaves and soaked in water which is then drunk.

1/A, /Plate 36 appears on page 305--Analyst/

[P. 304]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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• 412

/Plate 36-A/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

2: Turnbull E-8 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the huts and the shafts for spears; the ax is used for enlarging the holes in which bees make their hives, so that the honey can be extracted more easily. Younger Mbuti do not know what they would do without the machete for cutting saplings. Both they and the older men realize that the ax is not absolutely essential, and I have seen ax-shaped clubs used for breaking away the wood from around a hive, where the wood is rotten, as it frequently is. The older men say that if they did not have machetes for cutting saplings they would use stone tools, but they have no knowledge at all of how to make such tools, and are probably prompted to make this remark by the presence in the forest of early stone axheads.

Accepting, for the moment, that the Mbuti in their forest world are not in any position of necessary dependence upon the villagers for food or material, or technological skill, and admitting that in the village context they are dependent, the question arises as to why they choose to place themselves in that position of dependence. It is certainly not out of economic necessity. The truth of the matter is simply that the village offers, for a brief while, an agreeable change of pace, an opportunity for a relaxation that is not always possible in the forest, and, one might say, better hunting, on occasion. An Mbuti band or an Mbuti family or an Mbuti individual may descend upon a village either because of sheer whim, or because of laziness if the forest hunting gets too strenuous, or because of dissension, or indeed for almost any reason except necessity. Whatever the reason, and most commonly it at least involves an expressed desire for relaxation and freedom from care, the reason is on the side of the Mbuti, the choice is theirs, and the dependence that follows is as voluntary as it is temporary.

ECONOMIC RECIPROCITY

We then have to ask what the Mbuti offer in return for the food and metal products that they receive, and to determine at least the economic structure of the relationship. In so doing we are inevitably led to consider the domestic, political and religious aspects and their interrelationship with the economic system, and it is in these interrelationships that inconsistency and conflict emerge.

Even in terms of sheer economic reciprocity the relationship is inherently unstable. Continuing to grant, for the moment, the fact that no economic necessity is involved on the part of the Mbuti, and that their dependence is voluntary and temporary, the forest world remain-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-D]

4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

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344
352
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516

9. The Mbuti village barasa was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

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10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. [944] [621] [847]

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. [594] [561] [533] [664]

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. [843]

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. [844] [846] [412]

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. [846] [844]

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much [846] [751]

[P. 228-A]

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11. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 228-C]

142
302
412
287

23. A youth, Kenge, strips a piece of bark before it is soaked, prior to hammering it into cloth.

24. Strips of bark, softened by water or smoke, are hammered into cloth up to eighteen inches wide. There are many individual preferences for different types of bark.

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287

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, symbolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to attune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teku* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this.

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened.

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season.

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of

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17. Honey-gathering usually involves climbing to great heights, but honey is occasionally found near ground level. Only if found in fallen tree trunks can the honey be collected by women.

18. Honey is highly prized, but is nonetheless shared among all. Here Kelemokê's uncle, Masalito, shares with his favorite nephew.

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3: Turnbull B-5 (1951-1956) 1983 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekiangs's was different, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

Jr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cornered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived. They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young Mazamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond.

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds.

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground

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A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

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St Turnbull E-8 (1951-1956) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight.

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention.

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Massisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned

St Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

28] A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away
[237] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted
• [412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either
[386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of
287 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in
462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kongoy*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the
516 material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red *nkula*, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

481 lengths of 20 feet or so each from some flexible liana, and passes the first around the tree trunk, which may be as much as six feet thick. Then he sets the second liana in place in the same manner, and passes the two under his shoulders. He sits parallel to the trunk, which he faces, and grips with his feet. While bracing against one liana, he moves the other upward, then braces on it while moving the other. In this way he can climb up the slick, limbless bole of the tree, to where the first limbs branch off, some hundred or more feet above the ground.

When he reaches the first branches, he takes off his lianas and walks along the limbs like a tightrope walker or structural steel worker, free of the limbs, with nothing to hold in his hands. When he has accomplished his mission he comes down again the way he went up.

Pygmy Technology

• 417 197 439 **Basic tools.**—The keynote to the simple and specialized pygmy technology is the fact that they do not have to make any of their basic tools, but instead obtain effective iron cutting tools from their Negro hosts. This eliminates much work and the need for much skill in toolmaking, and provides them with more efficient instruments than they could possibly make for themselves at a food-gathering level of technology.

When a pygmy needs an ax he will beg one from his Negro host. Perhaps the Negro will give him a whole ax, haft and all. The blade is a triangular piece of iron, made locally by Negro smiths, and set in a solid wooden handle, adzed out of a larger piece of wood. The handle has a hole which has been burned through it from side to side with a hot iron. Through this

412 hole goes the narrow end of the ax.
[177] This is essentially a Neolithic type of
[439] hafting.

Perhaps the Negro will give him
[313] only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and
[284] all. He splits this with his knife, at one end. Then he wraps the split and the blade which he has thrust through it with twine or rattan. The pygmy will use the Negro-hafted ax on the ground, but if he is climbing a tree and needs an ax while up there, he will take along one of his own hafting by preference, because it is lighter.

Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles
[462] are added. The women use these for many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

412 The man's knife is larger and single
177 edged, a kind of small machete, made
439 in Germany. The Negroes obtain them from white men by trade and give them to the pygmies. I once tried giving them American machetes, of the kind prized in Central America, but they were too large and too heavy.

412 The men use these machetes for cutting
[313] lianas, tree limbs, and so forth. For
[322] small woodwork, however, such as whittling an arrow shaft, they are more likely to use an arrowhead or spearhead, which is nearer the right size.

Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.

[P. 326-B]